

TEFAP & Food Bank Food Supply

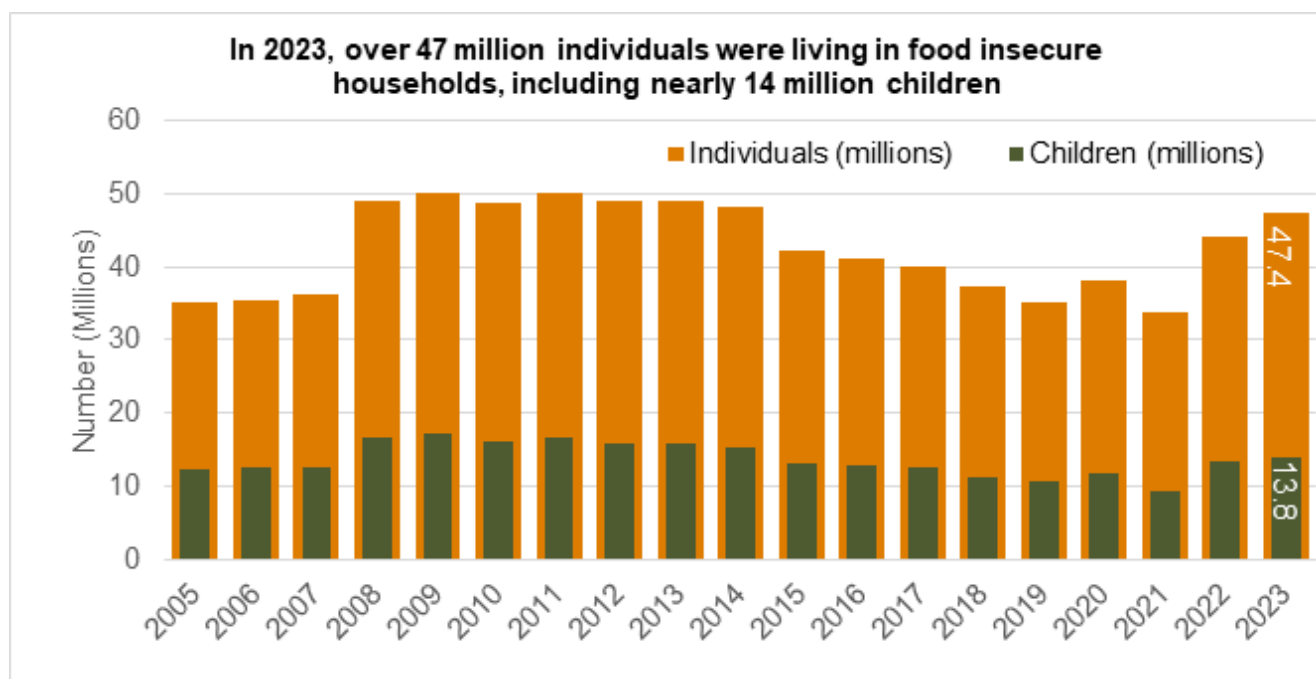


In every community across the U.S., people are working hard to provide for themselves and their families. But higher prices for food, housing and other necessities are driving more and more individuals to seek food assistance. This has been exacerbated by the end of temporary COVID-era assistance programs. In 2023, an estimated **47 million people in the U.S. were living in food-insecure households**. This is an **increase of 6% from the previous year** and the highest number since 2014.

Food Need Remains High

Feeding America is the largest hunger relief organization in the United States. As a network of more than 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 partner agencies, food pantries and meal programs—25,000 of which are faith based—we helped provide 5.3 billion meals to tens of millions of people in need last year. Although inflation has come down, food prices are still higher than last year.¹ In a recent survey of likely voters, more than 8 in 10 respondents said they are concerned about high food prices right now, and 7 in 10 want the government to do more to address food insecurity.²

Food banks are receiving fewer federal commodities through programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). To compensate, food banks have increasingly relied on food purchases—a backstop that is not sustainable.

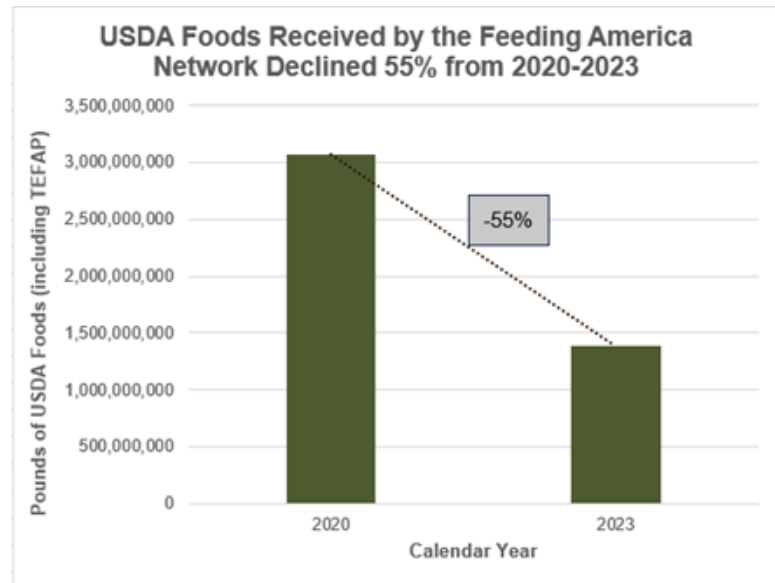


¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Consumer Price Index Summary](#) (January 2024).

² Perry Undem, ["Farm Bill: A National Survey of Likely 2024 Voters"](#) (2023).

Food Supply Impacted by Higher Demand and TEFAP Food Fluctuations

TEFAP is a cornerstone of the charitable food sector's food supply. The program provides, on average, around 20-25% of the food distributed through Feeding America food banks and local hunger-relief programs. A recent survey found that support for TEFAP is widespread. Ninety-three percent of likely voters said that TEFAP is an important program, and 85% support increasing TEFAP funding in the farm bill.³



As COVID recovery TEFAP funding from Congress ended, food insecurity drastically increased and food banks experienced a steep decrease in food, sometimes resulting in empty shelves and coolers. Despite several short-term USDA funding actions to provide additional food, TEFAP and additional USDA foods received by the Feeding America network have dropped from 3 billion pounds per year to less than 1.4 billion pounds per year—a **55% decline between 2020 and 2023**.

Feeding America is grateful to USDA for its continued commitment to hunger relief, including a recent announcement of \$1 billion in additional funding for emergency food assistance. These funds will help address the extraordinary need for food assistance in communities as the charitable food system is experiencing declining resources, supply chain disruptions to food programs for seniors and Native and tribal communities, and disaster response needs. Now, it's time for Congress to act.

Let's Invest in Proven Solutions and Innovations

Feeding America calls on Congress to:

- Reauthorize and double annual TEFAP entitlement funding to around \$1 billion per year in fiscal year 2025 (a \$500 million baseline adjusted for inflation) in the next farm bill.
- Provide an additional \$245 million in funding for TEFAP foods in disaster supplemental legislation to meet both the short- and long-term needs in areas impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton and other recent natural disasters.

Questions?

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³ Perry Udem, "[Farm Bill: A National Survey of Likely 2024 Voters](#)" (2023).